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MEASURES TO ELIMINATE INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

Letter dated 26 July 1994 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I would like to draw your attention to the terrorist bombing of the Argentine Jewish community's offices in Buenos Aires on 18 July 1994.

Shortly before 10 a.m. local time, a bomb weighing at least 300 kilograms exploded at the Argentine Jewish community's office building (AMIA) in Buenos Aires. As of 26 July 1994, approximately 80 innocent people were killed by the blast and 230 injured. Fourteen people are still buried beneath the rubble. The explosion caused the destruction of the AMIA building and damaged neighbouring structures as well. The AMIA building housed the Argentine Jewish Mutual Association, a social service organization, and the Delegation of Argentine Jewish Associations, the umbrella group of Jewish organizations in Argentina. This heinous crime shocked all civilized nations of the world.

In addition to the devastating human loss, the terrorist bombing claimed a heavy cultural toll, destroying literary and historical treasures, including a library and Judaica collection, as well as the 60-year-old archives that recorded the entire history of the Jewish community in Argentina.

This is the second terrorist attack directed against Jewish or Israeli targets in Argentina in just over two years. On 17 March 1992, a bomb exploded in front of the Israeli Embassy at Buenos Aires, killing 29 Argentines and Israelis, including 8 diplomats and staff members, and injuring more than 220 innocent people.

* A/49/150.

In a typewritten Arabic statement released in the Lebanese cities of Sidon and Beirut on Friday, 22 July 1994, a radical fundamentalist group calling itself Ansarallah, or Partisans of God, claimed responsibility for the terrorist attack on the AMIA building.

An official investigation into the bombing is being conducted in cooperation between Argentina, Israel and others. Initial findings indicate that the same organization was responsible for both the bombing of the AMIA building and the bombing of the Israeli Embassy at Buenos Aires just over two years ago.

This and similar terrorist organizations act in the name of a radical fundamentalist ideology and seek to derail the Middle East peace process. They direct their attacks against innocent human beings, solely because they happen to be Jews or Israelis, or others who are close to them. These organizations are assisted by countries that are known for their opposition to the Middle East peace process and for their support of international terrorism, first and foremost Iran.

Although Iran has never publicly claimed responsibility for the terrorist attacks on the AMIA building and on the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires, the investigations into both incidents have pointed clearly to Iranian involvement. Iran considers terrorism an acceptable means to achieve its political ends, and views its opponents as legitimate targets for terrorist attacks. Iran has been and remains a prime sponsor of terrorism throughout the world.

Giving in to terrorism will only encourage more violence and bloodshed. Israel calls upon the international community to cooperate in the fight against the terrorist threat posed by these radical fundamentalist organizations and their sponsors.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under item 145 of the provisional agenda.

(Signed) Gad YAACOBI
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Israel
to the United Nations